

## NONDISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT/CONTRACT PRACTICES

It is the policy of the Pennridge School District to provide to all qualified individuals equal access to employment regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin or non-job-related disability. The District will make reasonable accommodation for identified physical or mental impairment that constitutes a non-job-related disability in accordance with the requirements of state and federal law.

It is also the policy of the Pennridge School District to investigate and correct any instance of harassment/discrimination against any employee, student, vendor, parent by an employee, supervisor, student, parent or individual with whom the district conducts business.

Complaints of discrimination will be investigated promptly and if substantiated, corrective and/or preventative action will be taken. Although every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the complainant, accused and witnesses who participate in the investigation, confidentiality cannot be assured under all circumstances. The district will take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of all parties to the investigation.

### A. Compliance Officer

The Director of Human Resources is designated as the District's Compliance Officer.

The Compliance Officer shall publish and disseminate this policy and complaint procedure at least annually to students, parents, and employees. Publication may be made in any district publication, including the school calendar, student handbook, staff handbook or other documentation intended for distribution to employees and students. If practicable, the Compliance Officer may publish in a newspaper of general circulation in the community.

The Compliance Officer will monitor compliance with this policy of non-discrimination/harassment and, where appropriate or when requested, will investigate and/or assist in the investigation of complaints of discrimination. The Compliance Officer's duties may include monitoring compliance with non-discrimination/harassment policies related to hiring, promotion, termination and discipline.

### Step 1 – Reporting

A student, employee, or third party (hereinafter "complainant") who believes he/she has been the victim of discrimination/harassment is encouraged to immediately report the incident to the building principal or his/her administrator. The Compliance Officer shall be notified of the receipt of the complaint and shall provide the Compliance Officer with a copy of the complaint form when completed. Where the building principal or supervisor is the subject of the complaint, the complainant shall report the incident directly to the Compliance Officer who will designate an individual, who hereinafter shall be referred to as the "Investigator," to conduct the investigation. The Compliance Officer shall monitor the investigation.

All complaints should be made in writing. A report form shall be made available to the complainant, but reports will be accepted orally or in written form of any kind. If the report is made orally, the Investigator shall confirm in writing on the report form the substance of the complaint and request that the complainant verify that the information contained in the report form is accurate and true. The complainant will be asked to sign the report form.

Step 2 – Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination/harassment, the designated individual (“Investigator”) shall interview the complainant, the accused and any other individual with knowledge of the facts of the case or other pertinent information, including but not limited to any documentary, pictorial or other evidence. The Investigator shall make a summary of each interview. The investigation shall be conducted as promptly as possible without regard to whether there is a pending criminal investigation.

Step 3 – Investigative Report

Within fifteen days of the completion of the investigation, the investigator shall prepare a written report summarizing the information compiled during the investigation. The report shall include a conclusion as to whether in the opinion of the investigator, a violation of this policy has occurred. The report shall also include a recommendation for a corrective plan or discipline, where appropriate under the circumstances.

A copy of the investigative report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, Compliance Officer and Superintendent. Where appropriate, after dissemination of the report, the investigator may accept additional pertinent information from the accused or complainant or any other person with relevant information.

Step 4 – Corrective Action

The Compliance Officer shall review the findings and recommendation of the Investigator. Where there is a finding by the Investigator and approved by the Compliance Officer that a violation of the policy has occurred, corrective action will be taken in an effort to ensure that such conduct ceases and does not recur. Where appropriate and consistent with the District policy, state and federal law and the collective bargaining agreement, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment may result. Other corrective action may include, but is not limited to training, counseling, suspension with or without pay, demotion and/or other appropriate preventive action.

Step 5 – Appeal

Either the complainant or accused may appeal the decision of the Compliance Officer to the Superintendent or his/her designee. An appeal must be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of the receipt of the investigative report and finding.

If the appeal is filed with the Superintendent, the Superintendent shall review the investigation report and any other evidence submitted by either the complainant or accused. A decision by the Superintendent accepting or rejecting the finding and/or discipline shall be made within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the appeal. Communication of the decision shall be made in writing to the complainant and accused and the Investigator.

THERE SHALL BE NO RETALIATION AGAINST ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO MAKES A COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION OR PARTICIPATES IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE COMPLAINT. ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO BELIEVES THAT HE/SHE WAS THE VICTIM OF RETALIATION SHOULD FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE COMPLIANCE OFFICER USING THE PROCEDURES SET FORTH IN THIS POLICY.

However, an individual who makes a false claim of discrimination/harassment or whose complaint is made in bad faith may be subject to disciplinary proceedings consistent with state and federal law and any relevant collective bargaining agreement.

### PLANNING TIME

The teachers in elementary buildings shall receive a minimum of 200 minutes of planning time per week as reflected in the chart below:

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Music	30/30	40	40	40	40	45	45 min. per week
Art	0	45	45	50	50	55	55 min. per week
PE	40/40	45	45	45	50	55	55 min. per week
Library	30/30	35	35	35	40	45	45 min. per week
Health		35	35	30			min. per week
Guidance					20		min. per week

Teachers in the secondary buildings shall receive a minimum of one regular class period in consecutive minutes of planning time per day that shall be after the start of and before the end of the school day.

### PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The philosophy of the Penridge School District aims at encouraging and assisting each student to progress in a continuous growth pattern of academic achievement in harmony with his/her physical, social, and emotional development. The board authorizes the Superintendent and/or his designee to develop promotion and retention standards and procedures consistent with this philosophy.

Promotion is based upon a student's ability to demonstrate satisfactory achievement and progress in meeting State and district academic standards. Students will be given a variety of opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned, but all students are expected to meet the performance standards defined by district and program goals and objectives, curriculum documents, assessment procedures and graduation requirements.

Retention or non-promotion of students is a very serious matter. In determining promotion or non-promotion of a student, the combined recommendations of the teacher(s), guidance counselor, building administrator, other members of the staff who have knowledge of the student's ability and performance and, if applicable, the recommendations of physicians and/or other health care professionals should be considered.

The board authorizes the Superintendent and/or his designee to develop procedures to insure that parents/guardians and the student are informed of the possibility of a student's failure of a course or his/her non-promotion as soon as the possibility becomes apparent. If a student is failing a course or is in danger of non-promotion, the parent/guardian and teacher(s) should discuss the reasons for the unsatisfactory progress and cooperatively plan for the improvement of the student's academic progress.

### General Provisions

Promotion signifies that a student is able to demonstrate that s/he has acquired and can apply knowledge, skills, concepts and processes related to academic standards and requirements. These academic

proficiencies are defined by State academic standards, curriculum goals and objectives, assessment measures, graduation requirements and/or Individualized Educational Plans. Although the results of standardized achievement tests are pertinent to the decision to promote or retain a student, his/her overall scholastic performance is given primary consideration.

Each student is expected to demonstrate satisfactory achievement and progress in meeting age-appropriate academic standards. The school district's curriculum is designed to provide students with instruction supporting student attainment of State academic standards, district goals (as defined by the strategic plan) and curriculum goals and objectives. Student learning is assessed in a variety of ways including, but not limited to the following:

1. Grades on written work, performance tasks, projects and other classroom assignments;
2. Evaluations of musical, theatrical, dance or other performances;
3. Other demonstrations, performances, products or projects related to specific academic standards;
4. Teacher-developed examinations related to specific academic standards and curriculum goals and objectives;
5. Nationally-available achievement tests;
6. Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA) tests;
7. Evaluations of portfolios of student work related to academic standards and course requirements;
8. Rubric-based measures such as those related to formal independent study contracts and graduation project presentations.

Retention is based on a student's inability or failure to demonstrate that s/he has attained the knowledge, skills, concepts and processes necessary for further study or to acquire the course credits required for promotion. Efforts to remediate learning deficits and to accommodate specific learning needs, such as Instructional Support Team interventions and/or special needs evaluations, are prerequisites to consideration of retention. If a student is failing a course or is in danger of retention, the parents/guardians should be informed as soon as possible and given an opportunity to discuss with staff the identified academic deficiencies, intervention strategies, remediation plans and recommendations. Teachers, instructional support teachers, guidance counselors, building administrators and other professionals with direct knowledge of the student's needs and abilities are expected to work with parents to assist the student and to consider educational alternatives. A decision to retain a student in any grade other than kindergarten rests with the building principal, subject to the provisions of these administrative procedures and review by the Superintendent of Schools.

If a parent/guardian wishes a student to repeat a grade or a course and the student's grade(s) do not indicate unsatisfactory progress, the parent must submit the request in writing to the building principal. After consulting with the student's teacher(s) and other members of the staff who have knowledge of the student's ability and performance, the principal will determine if the potential benefit to the student warrants re-enrollment in the course(s) or grade.

### **Elementary School (Grades Kindergarten through Six)**

A student may be retained once and in some cases twice during his/her elementary and middle school experience (1-8). Any decision to retain a student should occur in the earliest grade or as soon as the student's academic weaknesses are determined. No student will be retained unless s/he has gone through a formal Instructional Support Team process or Special Pupil Services evaluation. The basis for non-promotion shall be the teacher's, guidance counselor's, instructional support teacher's and building administrator's decision that the student will profit from repeating the grade. Permission of the parent/guardian is not required for non-promotion, except for retention in kindergarten. Because kindergarten is not mandatory, a student may be retained in kindergarten only with the written permission of his/her parent/guardian. Nothing in this procedure will affect placements of special needs students consistent with their I.E.P.'s.

Students will be promoted if they have earned satisfactory grades for their instructional levels or otherwise demonstrated that they have met district and State academic standards. A student will not be permitted to receive tutoring or attend the summer school program in lieu of retention. Proficiency deficits, as identified by PSSA test scores or other local assessments will, however, be addressed within the subsequent class and/or through district remediation programs, as deemed appropriate by the professional staff. Parents/guardians may elect to have a child so identified participate in summer school, tutoring, or other remediation efforts at their own expense.

If non-promotion is to be considered, a student must be evaluated by the Instructional Support Team (IST) in order that the best possible estimate of his/her learning potential will be available. If the parent/guardian will not give permission for an evaluation, the teacher(s) and the building principal will use the best available information to estimate the student's learning potential. A psychological evaluation will be acceptable if it has been administered by a certified school psychologist during the student's school career.

The student's work samples and report card must indicate failing or unsatisfactory progress. The parent/guardian must be notified of the possibility of non-promotion in writing on the report card and when appropriate, the conference worksheet to be issued at the close of the second marking period if non-promotion seems possible. The parent/guardian must be notified in writing of the possibility of non-promotion as soon as practicable but in no case later than the report card to be issued at the close of the third marking period if a student is to be retained. Students who transfer into the district after the third quarter will be considered on an individual basis.

### **Secondary School (Grades Seven through Twelve)**

In the secondary schools, the following procedures are to be followed when a student is in danger of failing a course:

1. At the close of the first, second and third marking periods the guidance counselor should meet with any student who received a grade of E or F to discuss his/her academic progress. Counselors must meet with students with failure grades of E or F in more than one subject.
2. For any student who earns a grade of E or F in any marking period, the student's parents/guardians should receive communication (in writing or by telephone contact) about the anticipated failure from the teacher(s) involved as soon as practicable prior to the issuance of the report card.
3. For any student who receives a grade of E or F, the parent/guardian will be encouraged to request a conference for the purpose of discussing the student's academic progress and cooperatively planning for his/her improvement. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to initiate the conference.
4. For any student who receives a final grade of E or F in one or more course(s), the guidance counselor will be given copies of the interim report(s) that are given to the student or sent to his/her home.

Proficiency deficits, as identified by PSSA test scores or other local assessments will be addressed within the subsequent class and/or through special remediation programs (such as the Academic Program for Excellence), as deemed appropriate by the professional staff.

### **Middle School (Grades Seven and Eight)**

Admission to the middle school is based on promotion from the elementary school. Promotion shall reflect satisfactory achievement and social development of the individual student.

To be promoted from grade seven to eight, a student must demonstrate satisfactory achievement of academic standards by passing 6.5 credits of middle school level classes and to be promoted from grade eight to nine he/she must pass 6.5 credits of middle school level classes. Students who fail to earn credit in one or more high school level courses (such as Algebra I or Level I foreign language) will be permitted to advance to the high school, but will be required to address their deficiencies at that level. Any exceptions to the minimum credit requirements (other than those specified in a student's I.E.P.) must be approved by the middle school principal.

In the middle school, the grading system of A, B, C, D, and E is used. If a student receives an E in a course, he/she will fail the course but will be eligible to attend summer school to earn the necessary credit(s) for promotion to the next grade. In lieu of attending summer school, a student may be tutored for 40 hours per credit by a teacher holding a Pennsylvania teaching certificate in the area in which the student is being tutored. The cost for summer school and/or tutoring must be assumed by the parent/guardian. For the student to pass the course, the tutor must be approved by the building administrator prior to the beginning of instruction. The tutor must certify the student's successful remediation to the building administrator in writing. The school reserves the right to require tutored students to pass an examination prepared by the school staff in addition to the work completed under the tutor's instruction. Students who attend summer school or receive tutoring will receive a rating of "Satisfactory" (S) or "Unsatisfactory" (U) for their academic performance. Both the initial failure and the rating earned during summer school and/or tutoring will appear on the student's record. Students may remediate no more than 3 credits through summer school and/or tutoring.

A student may be retained once and in some cases twice during his/her elementary and middle school experience (1-8). No student will be retained unless s/he has gone through a formal Instructional Support Team process or Special Pupil Services evaluation.

### **High School (Grades Nine through Twelve)**

At the high school level, students who are unable to demonstrate their ability to meet district and State academic standards and/or course goals and objectives are subject to both failing grades and loss of academic credit(s). The student's ability to satisfy total credit hour and/or course distribution requirements may affect his/her eligibility for high school graduation. Failure to meet State academic standards as measured by the Graduation Project and/or the Grade 11 PSSA Test (or comparable local equivalent assessment of State standards) will also affect a student's eligibility for a high school diploma.

Each student in grades 9 and 10 is required to carry 6.0 credits including at least five major subjects as well as health/physical education. Each student in grades 11 and 12 is required to carry 5.5 credits as well as physical education. Placement in a senior (grade 12) homeroom will only be made for students whose academic credits are anticipated to be sufficient for graduation with their class or for graduation after the completion of one additional semester. Any exceptions to the minimum credit requirements must be approved by the high school principal.

In the high school, the grading system of A, B, C, D, E and F is used. If a student receives an E in a course, he/she will fail the course but will be eligible to attend summer school (operated by Pennridge High School or any other public or private school recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education) to earn the necessary credit(s) for promotion to the next grade. In lieu of attending summer school, a student may be tutored for 40 hours per credit before the beginning of the next school term by a teacher holding a Pennsylvania teaching certificate in the area in which the student is being tutored. The cost for summer